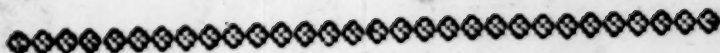
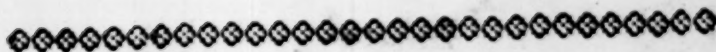


c. N^o. 221



SEASONABLE

REFLECTIONS, &c.



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SEASONABLE REFLECTIONS
HUMBLY OFFERED TO THE
CONSIDERATION
OF THE
LEGISLATURE,
BY SOME
ROMAN CATHOLICS,
OF
IRELAND.

DUBLIN:
THOMAS EWING.

Br 2027.71.5060*



Sheldon fund

SEASONABLE REFLECTIONS, &c.

I.

IN any Country, REAL Punishment operating perpetually against PROBLEMATICAL Guilt, is the highest Solecism in Politics.

II.

IF different Religious Doctrines are connived at in such a Country, Parties will be apt to misrepresent their Adversaries. The CIVIL Principles

ciples therefore of **THE MORE OBNOXIOUS** party, should by no means be taken from men ill-informed, much less from men **INDISPOSED** to be well-informed.

III.

THE legal Punishments inflicted on any set of obnoxious Religionists should undoubtedly receive their Justification from the **AVOWED CIVIL** Principles and general Conduct of such Religionists; They should receive no Justification from mere local **OPINIONS** or temporary Doctrines chargeable only on Those who maintain them.

IV.

If it should appear that the Case of the Irish Papists has been prejudged, would it not be worth the while (in the present State of the Nation) to give it a Rehearing, and examine **WITNESSES** instead of **ACCUSERS**?

V. **THE**

V.

THE Papists of Ireland have been long charged with CIVIL Principles inconsistent with the Security of our free and Protestant Government.

VI.

ON the SUPPOSITION of the Truth of that Charge, all the incapacitating Laws against the Irish Papists (since the year 1703) have been founded.

VII.

ON the CERTAINTY that the Charge is well-grounded; it will admit of no doubt but that the Legal Restraints on the Industry of that set of Men, ought to be continued *in PERPETUAL Operation*, because INDIGENT Security, is to be preferred to a DANGEROUS Prosperity.

VIII. ON

VIII.

ON the FALSEHOOD of that Charge much Evil to this Nation may be grafted. We might substitute Opinion to Knowledge and mistake greatly in the distribution of Rewards and Punishments.

IX.

MAY it not import the Legislature AT THE PRESENT TIME, in particular, to inquire whether the Proofs brought to support the above Charge against the majority of our Manufacturers and Farmers, be sufficient.

X.

SHOULD the Incompetency of such proofs be discovered; it would follow that we have long cherished a hurtful Mistake:—That our penal Laws have operated (for seventy years past)

past) without their PROPER Object:—That the General Good has been obstructed:—That Injury to the Public has not only been LICENSED, but ENFORCED by LAW: And that Individuals have been exposed to Punishments no way proportioned, in kind or degree, to their CIVIL Demerits.

XI.

SHOULD Irish Papists be willing to give such a TEST of their CIVIL Orthodoxy, as would be sufficient for the Security of the Civil Establishment, it may be presumed, that they cannot be proper Objects of legal Incapacities, which retain them from co-operating *with* THE PUBLIC, *for* THE PUBLIC, in such Services as Dissenters from the established Religion can be entrusted with.

XII.

SHOULD Irish Papists be ready to tender an Oath of Allegiance to his Majesty King
GEORGE

GEORGE the Third, and profess Religiously that no Power on Earth CAN ABSOLVE THEM FROM SUCH A DUTY, some Reasons must exist for rejecting in this Country a TEST found effectual and profitable in several other Protestant States on the Continent, particularly in Holland, in Brandenburg, in Saxony and in his Majesty's German Dominions.

XIII.

SHOULD Irish Papists, in the most solemn manner declare, that it is no Tenet of their Religion "That Faith is not to be kept with Heretics ;—That Popes have a Right to depose Kings, or transfer their Dominions to any Invader ;—That the Roman Pontiff can dispense with Perjury, or authorize the Commission of any MORAL or CIVIL Evil ;" It may be presumed that the Religious *Renunciation* of such Odious Principles may qualify the *Renouncers* for a reception into the Pale of our CIVIL COMMUNION.

OJ

bjsM

XIV. TESTS

XIV.

TESTS are no light things, with Men who make Religion, (good or bad) a Matter of Conscience. — Should any Papists among us, blinded by *school Opinions*, or rather influenced by Doctrines *never generally admitted*, refuse giving Government a TEST OF FIDELITY, their *Recusancy* would be useful Information, and Information to be depended upon. — It would afford a Proof of their Ill-affection to the Civil Establishment; but it would at the same time afford a Proof of their Sincerity also, and of their Abhorrence of Perjury to serve any Cause whatsoever. — Men of such a Cast would be easily detected, and their Error, as Subjects, should only affect THEMSELVES: It should by no means affect *Those who renounce it*; But the Legislature in such a Case, and in no other, would be enabled to direct the Penalties, on the face of our Statutes, to their proper Objects, and draw a precise Line between CONSTITUTIONAL and *Anti-constitutional Papists*. — In such a Case, our Law-givers would
be

be in Possession of the mighty Advantage of correcting the Mistakes, avoiding the Injustice, and preventing the Destruction ever attendant on indiscriminate Punishments.

XV.

GOOD Converts to our Civil Government can be very easily obtained, and seem to prevent application.—Converts to the Established Religion come in slowly:—Their number is not great; and the Experience of seventy years past demonstrates, that the *Rewards and Punishments of Law*, have but a very tardy operation, when opposed to the *Rewards and Punishments of Religion* (whether True or False in its Fundamentals.)—The latter frequently rousing our Hopes and Fears, have a mighty Influence on the human Heart, and (excepting Those who come in from Conviction) have been overlooked chiefly by Gentlemen whose Inheritances (soon after the Demise of the late King William) have been exposed to a Gavel Partition on Nonconformity to the established Worship.—The Conversion of such Men had a Motive too powerful with the rich and
luxurious

luxurious part of Mankind. It arose from the Grief of seeing what they deemed their Birth-Right transferred to another; it arose from the Pride of Family, from the greatness of the Reward, and particularly, from the Rigor of the Penalty, in a Fall from all Consequence in one's Country to a prospect of invincible Poverty.—We are not to wonder if such Motives had their Effects on Some; or that others (while they had the Power) disposed of their Inheritances, and flew with the Value into foreign Lands, to the Diminution of our circulating Specie.

XVI.

IN the present Distress of the Public, from the decline of our Manufactures, from Absentees abroad, and from legal Restraints on such great numbers at home; this Nation wants Cordials to strengthen, not the Emetic of a new Penal Law to damp the little Vigor we have left. —The Papists of Ireland through a Course of seventy Years have performed a long Quarantine of political Health; a term found sufficient for emancipating the *Jews* themselves after an equally long Captivity in *Babylon*.

XVII. WITH-

XVII.

WITHOUT permanent Property to be a pledge of their good behaviour to Government ; without any REAL security for even a monied Interest, without feeling the Joy of finding themselves at home in their native Country ; they can only express a WISH that their Fidelity, as Subjects, may obtain some Reward, and that the hardships they endure may be mitigated.—But whether the Grant of such a Mitigation or the further extension of new Penal Laws be most eligible, must be humbly submitted to the Wisdom of the Legislature.

F I N I S.

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